What is claimed is:

1   1.   A method of improving data validation, comprising steps of:

2   defining one or more validation criteria; and

3   encapsulating the defined validation criteria with a data model to which they apply.

1   2.   The method according to Claim 1, further comprising the step of using the defined

2   validation criteria to validate a data value for the data model.

1   3.   The method according to Claim 1, wherein the validation criteria are expressed in a

2   markup language notation.

1   4.   The method according to Claim 3, wherein the markup language notation is XML

2   ("Extensible Markup Language) notation.

1   5.   The method according to Claim 1, wherein the data model and the validation criteria are

2   expressed in a markup language notation.

1   6.   A system for improving data validation, comprising:

2   means for defining one or more validation criteria;

3   means for encapsulating the defined validation criteria with a data model to which they

4   apply; and

5   means for using the defined validation criteria to validate a data value for the data model.

1   7.   The system according to Claim 6, wherein the data model and the validation criteria are

2   expressed in a markup language notation.

1   8.   The system according to Claim 7, wherein the markup language notation is XML

2   ("Extensible Markup Language) notation.

1   9.   A computer program product for improving data validation, the computer program

2   product embodied on one or more computer-readable media and comprising:

3   computer-readable program code means for defining one or more validation criteria;

4   computer-readable program code means for encapsulating the defined validation criteria

5   with a data model to which they apply; and

6   computer-readable program code means for using the defined validation criteria to validate

7   a data value for the data model.

1   10.   The computer program product according to Claim 9, wherein the data model and the

2   validation criteria are expressed in a markup language notation.

1   11.   The computer program product according to Claim 10, wherein the markup language

2   notation is XML ("Extensible Markup Language) notation.